

Kalyan Lantern

JULY 2021

Vol. 07 | Issue 02 | MUMBAI | 36 Pages | Price: ₹ 10/-



“Blessed are those who have
not seen and yet have believed.”

John 20:29

JULY 3

Festal greetings

TO OUR BELOVED BISHOP

**MAR
THOMAS
ELAVANAL**



FROM YOUR

*Loving
Children*

OF THE
EPARCHY OF KALYAN



YOUR WORD IS A LAMP TO MY FEET & A LIGHT TO MY PATH

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Vol. 07 | Issue 02

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വഴിവിളക്ക്

മഹാമാരിയിൽ മനുഷ്യന്റെ ശരീരത്തോളം തന്നെ അവന്റെ മനസ്സും ആക്രമിക്കപ്പെട്ടിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഏകാന്തതയുടെ പരിചയവും അകൽച്ചയുടെ മതിലുകളും കൊണ്ട് സ്വയം സുരക്ഷിതരാകേണ്ടിവരും വിധം കോവിഡ് നമ്മെ വളഞ്ഞിട്ടാക്രമിക്കുന്നു. എല്ലാം അവ്യക്തം, അനിശ്ചിതം. ഇതിനെ നാം അതിജീവിക്കേണ്ടതുണ്ട്.

നമ്മുടെ കുട്ടികൾ മൊബൈൽ ഫോണിൽ ഒറ്റപ്പെട്ടുപോയിരിക്കുന്നു. അവർക്ക് പാഠപുസ്തകങ്ങളുണ്ട്. പക്ഷേ, ജീവിതപാഠങ്ങളില്ല. ഇനി മുതൽ മുറ്റത്തെ ഇളംവെയിലെങ്കിലും അവർക്ക് കൂട്ടായി വേണം. നിയന്ത്രിതമെങ്കിലും, കളിയിടങ്ങളും കളിക്കൂട്ടുകാരും അവർക്കുണ്ടാകണം. കോവിഡിന്റെ കണക്കിൽ ഒരു തലമുറയെ ബലികൊടുക്കാനാവില്ല.

വളരുന്ന യുവതലമുറയും നിരാശയുടെ നിശബ്ദതയിലാണ്. മനസ്സിന്റെ വിലാപങ്ങൾ മരണാസക്തിയായി മാറാതിരിക്കാൻ അവർക്ക് തെളിച്ചമുള്ള വിളക്കുകൾ ആവശ്യമുണ്ട്. ഉള്ളിലയുന്നവർക്ക് അവരിലേക്ക് വഴികാട്ടാൻ നമുക്കാവണം. ഒറ്റക്കായിരിക്കുമ്പോഴും ഒന്നിച്ചായിത്തന്നെ നാം ഏകാന്തതയെന്ന മഹാമാരിയെ നേരിടണം.

ഏകാന്തതയുടേയും, നിരാശയുടേയും, അന്ധകാരത്തിന്റേയും ജീവിതക്രമങ്ങളിൽ ശമിക്കുന്നവർക്ക് സഹചാരിയുടേയും, പ്രത്യാശയുടേയും, പ്രകാശത്തിന്റേയും കൂട്ടുകൾ അനിവാര്യമാണ്. ദൈവമെന്ന സർവ്വശക്തനായ, എല്ലാത്തിന്റേയും ഉടയവനായ സത്തയിലേക്ക് തിരിയേണ്ടതുണ്ട്. അതിനെ നാം വിശ്വാസം എന്നു വിളിക്കുന്നു. ഓരോ മനുഷ്യന്റെയും ഉള്ളിന്റെയുള്ളിൽ ദൈവമെന്ന വിശ്വാസനാളം വഴികാട്ടിയും, സഹചാരിയും, പ്രത്യാശയുമായി മാറണം. അനുഭവമില്ലാതെ അന്യമായി മാറിക്കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്ന ഈ വിശ്വാസത്തെ നമുക്ക് ഹൃദയത്തോട് ചേർത്തു പിടിക്കാം. ദൈവമെന്ന വലിയ സത്തയെ നമ്മുടെ കൊച്ചു ഹൃദയങ്ങളിൽ കാത്തു സൂക്ഷിക്കാം. ഈ വിശ്വാസം വളരുന്നതും, പങ്കുവയ്ക്കപ്പെടുന്നതും, സാക്ഷ്യമായി മാറുന്നതും കൂടുംബങ്ങളിലാണ്.

ഈ വിശ്വാസമെന്ന ശിലക്കു മാതൃകയായി നമ്മുടെ മുമ്പിൽ കുടികൊള്ളുന്ന വി. തോമാശ്ലീഹായോടു ചേർന്നു നമുക്കും ഹൃദയംകൊണ്ട് ഏറ്റു പറയാം. എന്റെ ദൈവമെ! എന്റെ കർത്താവേ !

നമ്മുടെ ജീവിതങ്ങൾ വരും തലമുറയ്ക്കു സാക്ഷ്യമായി തീരട്ടെ.

'DUKRANA'

IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19



Mar Raphael Thattil
Bishop, Diocese of Shamshabad

This year we, the St. Thomas Christians of India, are celebrating the feast of Dukrana of our Apostle Thomas in the midst the second wave of Covid 19 pandemic. As per the available data released by the Government authorities of our country around 30 million people are affected and around 4 lakhs of death occurred. Hospitals could not contain the sick and the affected, often appeared helpless in the face of the overwhelming spread of Covid-19. In this context of Covid 19 pandemic, I would like to make a personal reflection of the meaning and message of Dukarana of Mar Thoma. In the Gospels, besides in the name lists of the disciples of Jesus, Thomas, our Apostle, is presented on three other occasions. My reflections on Dukrana are principally based on these texts of Gospel of John.

1. My Lord and My God

In the Gospel of St. John, St. Thomas the Apostle is also called Didymous which means twin. Apostle Thomas is considered as one among the twin brothers. Some commentators call him also 'Doubting Thomas' since he doubted the apparition of Jesus to the other disciples (Jn. 20:24-29). He insisted: "Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in his side, I will not

believe" (Jn. 20:25). After 8 days Jesus again appeared to the disciples and he called Thomas and asked him to see and touch the wounds of his hands and the heart. Then Thomas acclaimed: "My Lord and My God". Church Fathers opine that the most doubting of the disciples became the most enthusiastic believer after he had seen the risen Christ. His declaration of faith is the most solemn manifestation of the divinity of Jesus.

On March 27, 2020 Pope Francis led the whole world in Eucharistic adoration in the midst of pouring rain at St. Peter's Square in Rome. His main purpose was to bring the whole world to pray as one family for God's intervention to end the sufferings of Corona virus. On that occasion the passage read for reflection was from Mark 4: 35-41. The strong storm and waves had disrupted the journey of the disciples to the other side of the river. As they totally failed in their attempts to control the boat they cried out to Jesus who was sleeping in the ship: 'Do you not see this; we are perishing, wake up Lord and save us'. Jesus woke up and rebuked the winds and the waves saying 'Be calm and be still'. Everything subsided and disciples were saved. Jesus then asked them: "Why are you afraid have you no faith?"

During the homily, Holy Father said, Covid-19 is a wake-up call to turn to Jesus for His intervention. He will definitely command the waves and winds of Covid 19, 'Be still and be clam'. Our attempts without Him will be in vain. Only He can bring things back to normal and give us 'His Peace'. Remember the rebuke of Jesus: 'Don't you have faith?' During Covid, our attitude often tends to be a continuation of the argument of St. Thomas that 'I will not believe until I see him'; an insistence on

reason and physical verification. Jesus repeats what he has told to our Apostle: "You have believed because you have seen me, blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe" (Jn. 20:29). Bible scholars are of the opinion that Jesus is asserting the superiority of the faith of those who believe without physical evidence. Covid circumstances should instill and inspire us to respond with St. Thomas "My Lord, My God". Covid 19 Pandemic shall not become a point of turning back from God rather it is challenging us to turn towards God.

2. Let us Go and Die with Him

Jesus said to his disciples 'Let us go into Judea again' to visit the ailing Lazarus at Bethany. To which the disciples responded: 'Rabbi, the Jews were but now seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?' (Jn. 11:8). The disciples dissuaded him in one voice with fear, saying that he had lot of enemies there awaiting a chance to

catch him. Here we see Thomas called the twin standing up and boldly saying to his fellow disciples, 'Let us also go that we may die with him'. (Jn. 11:16). Based on this incident, some of the Bible commentators present Didymous as the most courageous of all the disciples.

St. John Chrysostom opines that St. Thomas was not an extra-ordinary courageous disciple during Jesus' public ministry, but after having seen the nailed hands and pierced heart he became stronger than all other disciples and bears an invincible testimony of Jesus' resurrection. 'Let us go and die with him' is to be understood as an affirmation of his transformation, having experienced the 'Risen Lord'. In order to fulfill his promise to Jesus, he dared the most tedious and challenging journey to India and his martyrdom in India is the culmination of his identification to the crucifixion of Jesus.

Covid-19 is qualified by World Health Organization as a 'suffering beyond comparison in all the spheres of life'. It has created in the present society a state of uncertainty, depression, distress and disappointment. The psychological and spiritual emptiness is more serious than the physical and financial crises. Our smooth and comfortable life is very much affected by a culture of quarantine, understood as an isolation and loneliness.

Covid adversities invite us also to take a 'U turn' from certain wrong value system. Progress is often considered as mere advancement of comforts and conveniences; welfare is often defined as life made easier. In the past people remained satisfied with minimum needs, but by advancement of progress needs have grown to greed, and luxuries have become a matter of status symbol. The natural question of the ordinary people amidst Covid is: 'what is the meaning of this unbearable suffering'?

Covid can be compared to the journey with Jesus to Bethany, a place of opposition and suffering. Here we need to have the adventurous attitude of Apostle Thomas, 'to go and die with Him'. We have to learn and have the courage to see the positive aspects of sufferings. The mystery of



death and resurrection of Jesus will give us the courage and conviction. Struggle incites us for survival, and quarantine for renewal. As St. James says in his epistle without suffering there is no life (James 1:12). The wrong ideology that Jesus suffered on the cross so that we do not have to suffer is to be corrected. St. Paul rightly says that we are fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him (Rom. 8:17). Covid restrictions has taught us 'to be simple and humble', to live with minimum avoiding luxuries, to correct our lifestyle and to practice a life filled with virtues and values thereby to grow in authentic Christian holiness. St. Paul clearly states that 'walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other' (Gal 5:16, 17).

3. "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" (Jn. 14:5)

During the farewell discourse, Jesus said that, 'I am going to my father and I will come again and will take you to myself' (Jn. 14:3). Thomas then asked him 'where are you going, how can we know the way?' (Jn. 14:5). Answering Thomas, Jesus gave his reputed statement: "I am the way, the truth and the life" (Jn. 14:6). According to St. Augustine, Apostle Thomas became an instrument in the hands of God to this most meaningful "I AM" statement of Jesus Christ. This statement definitely is the classical affirmation of the divinity of Jesus. Besides, it reminds his followers of their responsibility of showing the way to all people who do not know the truth so that they may have life in abundance. Surprisingly, the community resulted from the apostolate of Thomas called themselves 'St. Thomas Christians of India' and their way of life, the "Way of Thomas" (Mar Thoma Margam).

Regarding the missionary endeavors of St. Thomas, Bishop Adolf E. Medlycott observed that St. Thomas arrived first in North India around A.D. 42. It is generally believed that during his first

visit Apostle Thomas visited Kalyan (Mumbai) in the diocese of Kalyan, and Bharuch in Gujarat in the diocese of Shamshabad. After that St. Thomas made a second visit to South India mainly to the Malabar Coast in A.D. 52. He is said to have founded seven churches in Kerala. He was martyred in A.D. 72 in Little Mount, (Chinnamalai) and his tomb is found in Mylapore, in the city of Madras in Tamil Nadu. One of the reasons that motivated St. Thomas to travel to India was the presence of Jewish migrant merchants scattered in India. Both in North and in South his primary target was the Jewish colonies of commerce and it was through them he reached to the local people.

The Syro-Malabar community which contains the major portion of St. Thomas Christians in India is spread principally in Kerala. The recent growth of Syro-Malabar Church throughout India and beyond is the result of migration. The diocese of Kalyan (Mumbai), Faridabad (Delhi), Mandya (Bangalore) and Hosur (Chennai) are dioceses created in the context of the migrated population of the Syro-Malabar Church. Shamshabad is the latest diocese created for Syro-Malabar Church for the 'Rest of India' where Syro-Malabar Church lacked jurisdiction. From 1950 onwards Syro-Malabar Faithful started migration to countries outside India. As a result the dioceses of Chicago (USA), Melbourne (Australia), Preston (UK) and Mississauga (Canada) were erected. A large number of Syro-Malabar migrants are also spread in the Gulf countries.

While celebrating Dukarana we have to think about the ecclesial and missionary dimensions of St. Thomas Christians in India and beyond. Pope Francis in his letter to the Bishops of India on 9th October 2017 clearly states that migrants' shall preserve their ecclesial patrimony and identity and transmit them to their posterity authentically. They shall not be up rooted from their ecclesial patrimony and identity in the migrated land. Like St. Thomas, our Father in Faith, we are called to show 'the way of truth and life' to our children by our authentic life witness.

The Syro-Malabar Church is well known for its

deep-rooted family traditions. Our Church from the very beginning considered family as the most important factor of faith formation and transmission. Our custom of giving the name of grandparents to the new born children, family prayer, receiving blessings from the parents, respecting the priests, considering a priest or a consecrated from each family as an obligation to the Church etc., are to be remembered and preserved.

I would like to call your attention to the statement of Pope Francis in the context of Covid lock down and closing down of the Churches that, it's a challenge to open our homes as domestic churches. Pandemic has taught us to return to our family bonds and traditions of family prayer, eating together and sharing faith and values by family get-together. Catechism in the Church is a supplementary aid given to the parents to form the children in faith. This does not exclude the responsibility of the parents to shape the children in faith by parenting. Pope Francis clearly said parenting is the beginning as well as the corner stone of faith formation.

Pope also states in his letter to the Bishops of India that migration is a means to the mission. Every migrant should become convinced of the possibility of mission in the migrated land. They know the land, language and the people. They are the best possible potential for a fruitful and effective mission work. Our migrants are well informed, trained and qualified in their respective spheres of life. Profession is certainly a means of sustaining and flourishing in life, but it shall also be a means of doing mission. Pope Francis often says profession shall be a means of professing faith. Our authentic life, vision and values should attract people to Jesus which is definitely 'An Evangelization through attraction'. The modern advancement of technology is great and vast. It

was not properly used by the Church for the evangelization while it was very much used by the secular world. Covid has forced the Church to make use of these possibilities for the benefit of the pastoral ministry. Church is becoming more and more online. Our qualified lay people can contribute substantially to make use of these possibilities for the effective working of ministries in the Church. The possibility of accompanying online our families, children,



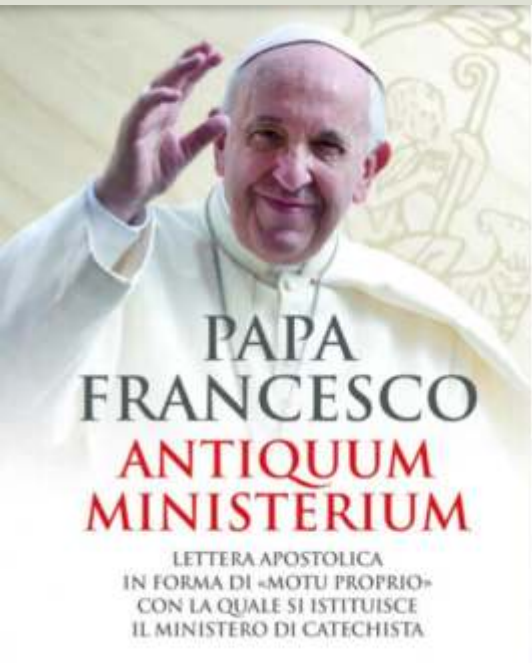
youngsters, parents and elderly are to be well sorted out and utilized effectively.

The genes of St. Thomas are to be kept up and Dukarana shall be an opportunity for recommitting ourselves to the transmission of faith by faithful preservation and practice of our patrimony. Every migrant is sent by God as a missionary to their migrated places. Mission is not a mere option but inevitable obligation. The true evangelization involves our authentic 'Word and Witness'. Like our Father in Faith we are too called to show the way, teach the truth and live life in abundance. The sufferings being endured through the impacts of Covid shall be a golden opportunity to accept suffering as a part of getting identified with the vision and values of Jesus. Like our Father in Faith, our life should also be an authentic proclamation of Faith: 'My Lord and My God'.



ANTIQUUM MINISTERIUM

AN OVERVIEW OF THE APOSTOLIC LETTER



Pope Francis in the form of a *motu proprio* has issued a new Apostolic Letter, “*Antiquum Ministerium*” (*Ancient Ministry*) on 10 May 2021. This letter officially establishes the “Lay Ministry of Catechist” in the Catholic Church. According to this letter, a lay person who has a special call to serve the Church as a teacher of faith can specially be instituted as 'Catechist.' It has thus become an official Church ministry. The institution of this ministry is a confirmation that the person invested with a charism is performing an authentic ecclesial service to the community. It is also a due

recognition for the laity that their fundamental role in communicating and educating the faith is much respected. An overview of this *motu proprio* may help us to understand the role and significance of this ministry in a better way.

Can you say that the ministry of catechist has a biblical foundation? (Article 1)

Pope Francis has begun the letter stating that this ministry is an ancient one. As a proof, he has made reference to the New Testament books, namely Gospel of Luke (1:3-4) and the letters of St. Paul (1 Cor. 12:28-31; Gal. 6:6). The reference to the need of an instructor, teacher etc in these books are the clear references to the so-called catechist.

When did this ministry begin in the Church? (Article 2)

This ministry has been exercised since the beginning of the Church. It is evident from the different forms of ministry carried out by men and women with the help of the Holy Spirit in the early church and different charisms mentioned in the letter of St. Paul (1 Cor. 12:4-11). Many people devoted their lives to the building up of the church. Gradually, this ministry of baptized persons took a more organic and stable form. The Church acknowledged their service and great contributions in the spread of gospel. It urges us to appreciate the new ways for evangelization.

Who carried out the ministry of catechesis in the Church? (Article 3)

Article 3 of the apostolic letter mentions the role and involvement of bishops, priests and deacons in catechetical instructions throughout the history of the Church. At the same time, the involvement of consecrated men and women needs a special mention because even certain religious orders have fully dedicated their life to catechesis. Also many men and women of deep faith,

authentic witnesses of holiness who eventually died as martyrs have directly taken part in the mission of the gospel through catechetical instructions. The long list of blessed, saints and martyrs who were catechists is a rich resource today for the church. In the modern world, many dedicated catechists are the community leaders and play a vital role in the transmission and growth of faith. Therefore, in a broader sense, every Christian faithful is called for this mission.

Do the church teachings give due importance to the ministry of catechist? (Articles 4 & 5)

Of course, the church teachings provide ample evidences. Second Vatican Council highlighted the need of direct involvement of the laity and their outstanding contribution to the spread of faith especially when there is shortage of priests to carry out the pastoral ministry (*Ad Gentes* 17). Many other church teachings like *Evangelii Gaudium*, *Fratelli Tutti* and the official publications like *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, *General Directory for Catechism* etc have confirmed the relevance of the catechist in the ministry of the Catholic Church.

The canon law (CIC cc. 225, 774 §§ 1, 2; CCEO cc. 401, 406, 617, 618) also emphasizes the role of catechists along with bishop, priests and parents in the catechetical formation of a person. It is also the duty of pastors to encourage, promote and recognize the lay ministries capable of penetrating the Christian values in the society.

Explain the role of a catechist in the Catholic Church? (Article 6)

The role of a catechist is recognized as a specific form of ministry in the Church when the Vatican II created awareness on the laity's role in the immediate cooperation with the apostolate of hierarchy (*Lumen Gentium* 31, 33). In order to exercise this ministry, a person has to

be expert in pastoral life in transmitting the faith in different stages of life. The responsibility of preparing a person for the sacraments of initiation and to provide ongoing formation to each person may be entrusted to them. The catechist must be (a)



witness of faith (b) mystagogue (c) companion and pedagogue (d) official teacher for the church. A person can grow in this identity through prayer, study and direct participation in the church life.

Are there any teachings which claim to institute this ministry in the Church? (Article 7)

Pope Paul VI has recognized the due importance of the ministry of the catechist and his apostolic letters *Ministeria Quaedam and Evangelii Nuntiandi* require special mention in this regard. In view of this, he introduced new forms of ministry for renewed pastoral ministry. Therefore, conferences of bishops of particular region were given the provision to approach the Apostolic See for the institution of such ministries in their region. Following these teachings, Pope Francis also emphasized in this letter that even though it appears new, the ministry of catechesis is closely tied up with the Church's living experience down the centuries. The execution of lay ministry of catechist emphasizes every baptized person's

missionary commitment carried out fully in a "secular" manner.

What newness can be found in the apostolic letter? (Article 8)

The attentive reading of article 8 of the apostolic letter will help us to find certain new aspects. First of all, the ministry is categorized as a vocation in which the discernment of diocesan bishop is obligatory. Secondly, a person will be instituted as a catechist through the officially published liturgical service (Rite). Thirdly, it is considered as the stable form of service for the pastoral needs as per the direction of bishop. Fourthly, those who have prior experience of catechesis can be instituted to this ministry. The required qualities for a catechist would be (a) a man or woman of deep faith and human maturity (b) active participant in the Church (c) a person with a quality of welcoming others (d) a person living a life of fraternal communion. They are also to be faithful co-workers with priests and deacons. After due consideration of all the above mentioned points, Pope Francis has officially instituted it as Church's ministry in article 8 stating "...by Apostolic Authority I Establish the Lay Ministry of Catechist."

What is the mode of execution of this ministry in the Church? (Articles 9-11)

Pope Francis has requested episcopal conferences to determine the process of formation and normative criteria for the admission to this ministry. In Oriental Churches, the synod of bishops is free to adopt its norms in accordance with their Particular Law. So, in the Syro-Malabar Church, the synod of bishops may provide further guidelines of execution. Pope reminds the bishops to acknowledge the ministries and charisms of the laity and thereby all corporate each other in the common task. Pope concludes; "... this motu proprio have firm and stable effect, anything to the contrary notwithstanding, even if worthy of special mention..." (article 11).



CATECHISM- WHAT CAN WE PARENTS DO **A LISTICLE**



Don Bosco
Amala Matha Church, Mulund

"Because Faith is best taught and lived out in the family, the Church calls parents to be the first and foremost educators of their children."

One of the important factors that lead to the faith maturity of Children is the Faith Formation imparted to children at home by Parents. When Parents encourage their children to discuss faith and act accordingly, a strong deep-rooted faith is built in the children.

Parents are already imparting faith formation at home (not realising it) and they can easily do more. Parents can do more by focussing on these points:

1. Talking to children about God and Faith.
2. Developing religious practices/devotions at home
3. Doing charitable deeds along with children to help people in need (*"For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead. James 2:26*).

1. Talking to Children about God and Faith:

a. On Sundays, parents as per their convenient time, can devote a minimum of 5-10 mins to recap what the child has learnt during catechism class. We need to ask simple questions which will make them comfortable in initiating a discussion such as "What did you learn about Jesus today?" or ask them to show the video or the song which they learnt in class.

b. Teaching without Words: There are a lot of Catholic coloring pages and education worksheets available on the Internet which can be downloaded, preferably on the lesson they have learnt. The parents can also colour these sheets along with their children. Try to answer any questions which may be asked by the children. However, if the parents are not able to answer, the child can be encouraged to ask the same during the next catechism class.

c. Learning the Word of God together: One is easily able to obtain bible verses as a deck of small placards at book stalls. We can ask the children to pick one bible verse from the deck, for them and for us. We can read the bible verse aloud and also try to memorise them together. By doing this, we can learn together a minimum of 50 verses in a year. We can encourage the Children to participate in the Kerygma Quiz conducted by Our Diocese.

d. Sharing Personal Experiences about Faith: Children love to hear our experiences. We must always share the experiences of God's intervention in our lives. This powerful and realistic sharing always remains with them and they will seek God during their own trials and difficulties.

e. Teaching through Videos: There are a lot of Videos which are available on the Internet which answer questions on Faith, Saints, Commentaries

Parents are already imparting faith formation at home (not realising it) and they can easily do more.



on faith and culture etc. For eg. Brother Francis, Saints Online, Bishop Robert Barron etc. These videos are of 5-15 mins duration and self-explanatory which can be watched with the children together on Sundays.

2. Developing religious practices/devotions at home: Our children follow us just as we follow our parents. We should ourselves and also encourage our children to:

Pray to God in the morning and night to acknowledge God's Divine Providence.

Participate in the Holy Qurbana as often as possible.

Personally, read the word of God daily for a minimum of 5-10 mins. We should spend some

time in silence after reading the word to meditate and to listen to our God speaking to us.

Thank God for the daily food by reciting the Grace Before and Grace After meals together as a family. Share within our family the blessings we received from God during the day to inculcate the habit of thanking God for every small blessing we receive in our children.

Take lead by turns during the Family Prayer, reciting the mysteries, litany, reading the word of god, singing hymns etc.

Seek intercession of Mother Mary by reciting Personal Rosary, the Memorare, Three Hail Mary's before any important activity etc. to obtain divine providence. We should also seek the intercession of our Baptismal saint and other patron saints too.

Fasting and Praying once in a week to fulfill the desires of God and what He wills for our lives.

Remember the day of Our Baptism and gain the plenary indulgence by renewing the baptismal promises on that day.

During Kudumbasamelan meetings, take the lead to read the bible, spontaneous prayers, Sing songs, perform joint activities with your child etc.

These are some of the religious practices / devotions which can be done at home and one could develop many more, which shall aid in our own and our child's faith formation.

3. Doing charitable deeds along with children to help people in need:

It is often said, the right hand must not know what the left hand is doing. However, we should just do the opposite as an example to our children. We need to encourage our children and do charitable deeds along with our children, to make them aware of the abundance of God's providence in our lives and also inculcate the habit of sharing with others who are in need.

Additionally, I have compiled a list of resources which the parents can easily refer to and should have, as part of quick references in their homes

which shall aid in imparting Faith Formation at Home to our children:

1. List of Links for quick access to Parables/Bible Stories/About Saints/Publications/Videos etc.

a. Brother Francis-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPEEVzjU-0k>

b. Stories of Saints:

<https://www.youtube.com/hashtag/storiesofsaints>

c. Open Bible Stories

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLa3fZSWwn6DdjBntziF3HmgjnWBSDAiO> (Please refer to the videos only on the channel)

d. Understanding Indulgences According to the Teachings of the Church – By our Loving Bishop – Mar Thomas Elavanal

<https://youtu.be/2MB1FeD4ajw>

e. Apostolic Letters/Apostolic Exhortations (Latest- Motu Propria and Archives (Dei Verbum, Evangelii Nuntiandi etc.) – can be accessed at

<https://www.vatican.va/content/vatican/en.html>

f. Kalyan Lantern- Holy Qurbana Series- by Our Loving bishop Mar Thomas Elavanal

<https://kalyandiocese.com/departments/kalyan-lantern/>

g. The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) Bible – Download the App

h. Diocese of Kalyan (*History / Milestones / Emblem Explanation / SyroMalabar Church etc.*) -

<https://kalyandiocese.com/about/history/> and official Website
<https://kalyandiocese.com/>

i. Brief and insightful commentaries on faith and culture by Catholic theologian and author Bishop Robert Barron -

<https://www.youtube.com/user/wordonfirevidео/videos>

2. Books (*To be kept at Home for ready references*):

a. The Catechism of the Catholic Church – which is a statement of the Church's faith and of Catholic Doctrine, attested to or illumined by Sacred Scripture, the Apostolic Tradition and the Church's Magisterium. This publication can also be accessed online at

https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM

b. YOUCAT for Kids is an introduction to the teachings of the Catholic Church for children. Cheerful drawings encourage the young readers to explore and ask questions, which helps to initiate an exciting conversation with your children about Jesus, the sacraments, prayer, and more

<https://www.youcat.org/products/youcat-for-kids/>

c. YOUCAT is the Catechism of the Catholic Church for adolescents and young people. The most important elements of the faith are summarized briefly and comprehensibly in a question-and-answer format.

<https://www.youcat.org/products/youcat/>

In addition, It is also available as an App - The app offers a daily 5-minute dose of the most important texts of the Catholic church: Bible, YOUCAT and DOCAT.

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.youcat.daily&hl=en_IN&gl=US

d. DOCAT is an excellent source of information on social justice for young people and Parents, helping them to get to know and live the social doctrine of the Church. -

<https://www.youcat.org/products/docat/>

e. Holy Qurbana- A Pictorial Journey- Perumthottam Mar Joseph. This book presents this great mystery through pictures in order to help the people to participate actively in the Holy Qurbana so that they may acquire the experience of Salvation.

Why are we celebrating this year as the year of Holy Qurbana and St. Joseph?



Compiled by

Fr. Biju Mannamcheril

Director, Department of Catechism, Diocese of Kalyan



DEPARTMENT OF CATECHESIS
DIOCESE OF KALYAN

Pilgrimage is a symbol of life. It makes us think of life as walking on a path. If a person, in life, doesn't walk, but instead stays still, it tends to be useless. And for a person who walks, needs energy. For a Christian, who is on a pilgrimage to Heavenly Jerusalem, needs Eucharist as a source of energy, because Eucharist is the powerhouse of Christian life. Only those who love Jesus can understand the power of the Holy Eucharist and its importance in the pilgrimage to Heavenly Jerusalem. The real meaning of Holy Eucharist, given by Jesus, can be felt only in the matrix of love and sacrifice. Jesus, the Priest and Sacrificial Victim, broke and gave Himself right from the stable to the cross, emptying Himself through the language of love and a life of compassion. In each Holy Eucharist, this ineffable sacrifice is being reiterated and the promise that those who eat this bread will live forever, is being echoed. Every time when we partake in this sacrifice, our faith is being nourished.

But in today's scenario when we are all hit by the pandemic, the faith of many has been shaken and fickle. Our lifestyle has also been dramatically changed. We also feel that our freedom is also being curtailed. Such feelings have definitely led us to fear, uncertainty and despair in our lives. During this pandemic, we were unable to attend physically the Holy Eucharist, and we were left with online services only. The active participation and vibrancy of many were lost. Online platform has also made

us think and question the foundations of faith in which we believe. The love for Holy Eucharist has weakened in many. It is at this juncture that we need to understand the importance of Holy Eucharist. Children and young people, in particular, can love Jesus and embrace the Holy Eucharist only if they understand the meaning and depth of the Holy Sacrifice. This is why the Department of Catechism wants to celebrate this year as the 'Year of the Holy Qurbana'.

Our Holy Catholic Church has also dedicated this year specially for the veneration of St. Joseph. Therefore we would also be celebrating this year as the 'Year of St. Joseph'. The beginning and foundation of the process of Faith formation is in family. The head of the family plays a vital role in this formative aspect. Family heads who become exemplary models to its members are in fact giving a valuable testimony of Christian faith. Holy Family gives us the definitive form of Christian family life. The family head St. Joseph wrapped them with utmost protection and care and led them in true spirit of prayer and devotion. More than mere intellectual trainings, authentic life testimonies would do far better in the realm of faith formation. May our Lord Jesus Christ fill our hearts with His torrential graces and copious blessings especially through the Most Blessed Sacrament. May the prayer of St. Joseph and the intercession of Blessed Virgin be with us all forever.

Leading the Way of Faith



Reni Anish

St. Mary's Church, Malad East

Like most parents, we have a lot of hopes for our kids. We hope that they'll be happy and healthy. We hope that they'll be compassionate and independent. But of all the various things we hope for them, there is a clear one at the top: We hope they grow up to love and follow Jesus. I would venture to guess that most Christian parents would say the same. 2020 surely was a challenging year. Our lives were completely thrown out of rhythm, be it with respect to our job security, academics, spirituality and what not. The closure of churches and deliverance of sacraments were a huge blow. As a parent, I was worried about the spiritual formation of my kids - aged 6 and 3. I had a lot of inhibitions regarding online mass and it sure was a challenge to get into that mode of spirituality initially. But slowly, it became the new normal. Every Saturday, we would mentally prepare them for holy mass on Sunday so that they would get up early, get dressed appropriately and attend the services. With small kids, it's difficult to attain complete attention but I believe in not giving up.

Teaching kids about Jesus' love, nurturing their relationship with God from a very early age and helping them discover the joy of welcoming spirituality and traditions into their heart is our call as Christian parents. Teaching children to trust in God's plan and mercy has become all the more important in these turbulent times. We have started taking baby steps in infusing their faith like the everyday practice of making my elder one read the Kids' Bible and asking her about her understanding of a particular story or passage and connecting it to an event that

occurred in her life. I remember an instance where we read the story of David and Goliath and we tried to reason out the various aspects of the story, for eg: Why do you think God chose David who was so young? Do you think David was scared to face Goliath? etc. It's much easier for children to assimilate information and understand certain notions when they are linked to daily situations.

Managing screen time for kids has become a challenge during the pandemic. To ensure fruitful screen time, we would make them watch Superbook or Life's of saints especially during feast times along with other entertainment programs. Singing hymns is something that we enjoy during these days and my kids thus learnt many new songs. For kids, this is just another way to have fun, but the words and lyrics they sing will echo in their hearts and minds and bring them closer to God. It takes a village to raise a child. My mom insisted that my elder one learn at least one Psalm during this time. I feel very happy that my daughter now knows Psalm 23 and some verses of Psalm 46.

Though we were confined at home, the various activities organised by the parish and diocese kept the wheel moving and we made sure that they participated in different activities to ensure they are aware of their church and the diocese. By the grace of God, despite all the hiccups, we were and are able to ensure the development of our children. The greatest gift a Christian parent can give their child is undoubtedly, the gift of faith.

FAMILY CATECHISM RENEWED



Dalie Devassy
St. Kuriakose Chavara Church,
Kandivli East

Parental Catechesis is one of the most discussed subjects in the Church during this pandemic, where there is uncertainty in the functioning of all domains. While the pandemic closed all doors in our everyday lives; online life turned out to be the new normal. Shifting of the Holy Mass, Catechism classes and community meetings to digital platforms created a great impact on the spiritual and emotional growth of our children.



The inability to receive the sacraments physically, the lack of warmth of relationships, the lack of personal touch with catechism teachers, the absence of Church celebrations and feasts added to the threat of our children going astray in their spiritual journey.

Special thanks to our Diocesan Catechism team for giving weekly assignments to keep them on track. Many interesting spiritual activities like tasks and Bible quizzes to impart faith to the little ones were implemented at the parish level. In the meantime, I personally realized the great importance of parents'

involvement in the faith formation of children. Hence, we started practicing Family Catechism, where the children's weekly activities shifted to "OURS". We embraced the 'new normal' gracefully, where I got to learn many things from my kids and vice versa.

While taking part in one online fancy dress activity, I requested my 9 year-old daughter to wear a red woolen shawl over a white robe, which she denied because it was too warm. But she was very sure and confident that everyone would recognize her as Jesus Christ once she delivered "HIS" words. I realized the block in my mindset where I couldn't visualize Jesus Christ other than in a red shawl over the white robe.

The other day, I remember when my teenage son was confused over one activity where he had to name his favorite Biblical character and the reason for his liking. He faced a tie between Doubting Thomas (St. Thomas) and the Donkey (Who carried Jesus Christ to Jerusalem) and guess what, the Donkey won over St. Thomas and his decision surprised me. He went on convincing me about why the lowly animal whom Jesus Christ chose to ride on his triumphal entry was his favourite. Even I was speechless to learn that this admiration started after hearing a Palm Sunday sermon.

This phase of uncertainty continues, but definitely shall pass. Despite all the challenges, we as a family are growing spiritually and emotionally together. Aren't we?





Mrs. Somini Winson
Holy Trinity Church, Thane

“നിങ്ങളുടെ ഉൽകണ്ഠകളെല്ലാം അവിടുത്തെ ഏൽപ്പിക്കുവിൻ; അവിടുന്ന് നിങ്ങളുടെ കാര്യത്തിൽ ശ്രദ്ധാലുവാണ്” (1 Pet. 5 : 7)

മാനവരാശി കണ്ട ഏറ്റവും വലിയ മഹാമാരിയുടെ കരാളഹസ്തത്തിനു അടിമപ്പെട്ട നാം, ഉൽകണ്ഠകളുടെയും, ആകുലതകളുടെയും, കാലഘട്ടത്തിലൂടെയാണ് കഴിഞ്ഞ 16 മാസക്കാലമായി കടന്നുപോകുന്നത്. 2020 March 22, രാത്രി സമയം 8 മണി. രാജ്യം സമ്പൂർണ്ണമായ് lockdown ലേക്ക് പോകുകയാണ് എന്ന പ്രധാനമന്ത്രിയുടെ പ്രഖ്യാപനം നാം ഓരോരുത്തരും ഉൽകണ്ഠയോടും, അതിനേക്കാൾ ഉപരി ആകുലതയോടും കൂടെയാണ് ശ്രവിച്ചത് എന്നു പറയാം.

ഇനി എന്ത്? എങ്ങനെ? പ്രതിസന്ധിയെ എങ്ങനെ തരണം ചെയ്യാം?

അങ്ങനെ അനവധിയായ ചോദ്യങ്ങൾ നമ്മെ നിരന്തരം അലട്ടിയ കാലം.

എന്നാൽ, ഈ പ്രതിസന്ധിയെ ഒക്കെ കരുതലോടും, നിശ്ചയദാർഢ്യത്തോടും, തരണം ചെയ്യാൻ ഓരോ ക്രൈസ്തവനും, ആർജ്ജവം പകർന്നത് അവന്റെ അനന്തമായ വിശ്വാസവും, താൻ വിളിക്കുന്നവൻ സമീപസ്ഥൻ ആണ് എന്ന ഉറച്ച ബോധ്യവും അവനിലുള്ള പ്രത്യാശയും ആണ്.

മാറി വരുന്ന സാഹചര്യങ്ങൾക്കനുസൃതമായി മാറുവാൻ സവിശേഷകഴിവുള്ള നാം പല സാങ്കേതികവിദ്യകളും ചുരുങ്ങിയ കാലയളവിൽ അഭ്യസിക്കുകയും, അവയുടെ ഫലപ്രദമായ ഉപയോഗം ദൈനംദിന ജീവിതത്തിൽ പ്രാവർത്തികമാക്കാൻ പരിശ്രമിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു എന്നു പറയാം.

വിശ്വാസപരിശീലനം നേരിട്ട വെല്ലുവിളികൾ

★ ഞായറാഴ്ചകളിൽ കാലത്ത് ദേവാലയത്തിൽ പോയി വിശുദ്ധ കുർബ്ബാന അർപ്പണവും, വേദപാഠക്ലാസുകളും കഴിഞ്ഞ് മടങ്ങി വരുന്ന കുഞ്ഞുങ്ങൾക്കും, രക്ഷിതാക്കൾക്കും ഈ പെട്ടെന്നുള്ള മാറ്റം ആദ്യത്തെ കുറെ നാളുകളിൽ ഒരു വെല്ലുവിളി തന്നെയായിരുന്നു.

★ ശരാശരി 6-9 വരെ മണിക്കൂർ ഒരുദിവസം ക്ലാസുകൾ ഓൺലൈനായി പഠിക്കുന്ന കുട്ടികൾക്ക് Sundayകളിൽ വീണ്ടും Mass ഉം Catechism Class ഉം Online ആയി പങ്കെടുക്കുന്നതിൽ വിരസത തോന്നിയിരുന്നു എന്നുള്ളത് ഒരു വസ്തുതയാണ്.

★ പ്രത്യേകിച്ചും ഇത്തരത്തിലുള്ള പാഠ്യമാധ്യമത്തിൽ അദ്ധ്യാപകരും കുട്ടികളും തമ്മിൽ നേർക്കുനേർ ആശയവിനിമയം സാധ്യമല്ല എന്നുള്ളതാണ് ഏറ്റവും വലിയ പ്രശ്നം.

★ കുടുംബം വിദ്യാലയവും, ഒപ്പം ദേവാലയവും ആയി മാറിയപ്പോൾ രക്ഷിതാക്കളെ സംബന്ധിച്ചിടത്തോളം അവരുടെ ഉത്തരവാദിത്വങ്ങൾ കുറെക്കൂടെ വർദ്ധിച്ചു എന്നുള്ളതിൽ സംശയമില്ല.

വിശ്വാസപരിശീലനം ഫലപ്രദമാക്കാൻ ഞാൻ സ്വീകരിച്ച വഴികൾ

★ ഓരോ ആഴ്ചയും എന്റെ മകൻ

കൃത്യമായി Catechism ക്ലാസുകളിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കുന്നു എന്ന് ഉറപ്പാക്കിയിരുന്നു.

★ ഓരോ ആഴ്ചയും Whatsapp ഗ്രൂപ്പിൽ Teacher Share ചെയ്യുന്ന Study Materials, Videos മറ്റു Activities മുതലായവ മകൻ കാണുകയും മനസ്സിലാക്കുകയും ചെയ്തിട്ടുണ്ടെന്ന്, അവനുമായുള്ള ആശയവിനിമയത്തിലൂടെ മനസ്സിലാക്കിയിരുന്നു.

★ Weekly Assignments / activities etc. എഴുതുന്നതിന് പ്രോത്സാഹിപ്പിക്കുകയും അവ സമയാസമയങ്ങളിൽ കൃത്യമായി Teachers-ന് അയക്കുന്നുണ്ടോ എന്ന് കൃത്യമായി വീക്ഷിച്ചിരുന്നു.

★ ക്ലാസുകൾക്കൊപ്പം രൂപതാടിസ്ഥാനത്തിൽ നടത്തപ്പെട്ട മറ്റു Common eventsനു പങ്കെടുക്കുവാൻ പ്രോത്സാഹിപ്പിക്കുകയും, അതിനു വേണ്ടുന്ന എല്ലാ പ്രോത്സാഹനവും നൽകാൻ എന്നും പരിശ്രമിച്ചിരുന്നു.

★ Catechism Teacherഉംആയി പതിവായി ആശയവിനിമയം നടത്തിയിരുന്നു. Youth Sectionൽ പഠിക്കുന്ന കുട്ടികളുടെ മാനസിക നിലവാരം മനസ്സിലാക്കി, വളരെ സൗമ്യമായും എന്നാൽ ഏറ്റവും കൃത്യനിഷ്ഠയോടുകൂടെ കുട്ടികൾക്ക് വിരസത തോന്നാത്ത രീതിയിൽ Teacher Classകൾ online ആയി കൈകാര്യം ചെയ്തിരുന്നു എന്നുള്ളത് ഏറ്റവും സ്തുത്യർഹമാണ്.

ചുരുക്കത്തിൽ, അതിജീവനത്തിന്റെ പാതയിലൂടെ കടന്നുപോകുന്ന വിശ്വാസികളായ നമ്മെ സംബന്ധിച്ചിടത്തോളം, വിശ്വാസപരിശീലനം ഒട്ടും കോട്ടം വരാതെയും, തനിമ നഷ്ടപ്പെടാതെയും നമ്മുടെ കുട്ടികൾക്ക് ഈ പരീക്ഷണകാലത്തും എത്തിക്കാൻ Catechism Commission, Teachers, Parents, കുട്ടികൾ, എന്നിവരുടെ കൂട്ടായ പങ്കാളിത്തത്തിലൂടെ സാധിക്കുന്നു എന്നുള്ളത് അഭിനന്ദനാർഹമാണ്.

പ്രത്യാശയുടെ പാതയിൽ ...
ഒരുമയോടെ ...
നമ്മുക്ക് ഈ പരീക്ഷണത്തെയും നേരിടാം!!!



Parental Catechesis: A Personal Experience



Varsha Lyndon
Christ the King Church, Bhandup



Whenver I hear my kids sing our catechism anthem, I also sing along with them as it reminds me of my own catechism days. Parents have the first responsibility of raising and educating their children which includes their faith formation as well. Our catechism teachers play a very important role in moulding the Christian faith of our children. On the catechism inaugural day, when it was announced that my children would have online catechism, I was worried about how I would manage all this. But there was an inner voice which would say 'I can do it. God will help me'.

Every week, the teachers used to send beautiful explanations of the chapter which made it easy for me to explain it to my children. The weekly activities were so interesting that my kids used to enjoy doing it. The Christeen program, the Marian devotion activities for children kept the children active, engaged, and enthusiastic.

Nowadays, children are so used to their mobile phones and laptops because of online classes, I thought that this could be used in making them learn about our faith. I used to make them watch biblical stories and then ask small questions and give them chocolates. Then my elder daughter took the lead and they used to play the same. Then they started watching stories about saints and I used to explain it to them in simpler ways. I used to make them learn the action songs sent by the catechism teacher and even search for new songs which they can learn easily. Many songs like 'vishudhiyil bhayankarane', 'amme ente amme' I used to play on our music player.

Hearing the songs on a continuous basis made my kids learn them.

Being a working mother, the online Holy Qurbana gave me an opportunity to attend mass on a regular basis and that too along with kids. Initially, my kids used to ask me why we were attending mass on weekdays, but I used to tell them that we should attend as many Holy Qurbanas as possible as we can be closer to God. I have initiated my kids to take the lead for family prayers. Seeing their elder sister say the rosary and prayers, the younger kids have also started saying the prayers. Now my 5-year-old daughter says the litany by herself.

By these small ways, I have tried to inculcate faith formation in my children. My in-laws have been a great support system for me and my kids as my children learn a lot from their grandparents. As time passed, I felt more confident and content in implanting the seeds of faith in my children which we received from our ancestors. This was a wonderful experience of mutual benefit for me and my children. As rightly said in Proverbs: 22:6 "Train children in the right way, and when they grow old, they will not stray."



Pandemic Faith Formation in the Family



Shiny Varied Ajimon
St. Thomas Church, Mira Road

“The light of Faith makes us see what we believe” –
St. Thomas Aquinas

I have always believed that as parents, there is only so much one can impart to their children through conscious Faith Formation, however the true journey of their Faith comes from within them through their personal faith experiences gained over their growing years. Having said that, the foundation we lay in them as parents most definitely play a significant role in strengthening their Faith Journeys.

We both being working parents to our 12- and 17-year-old children, finding time specifically for Faith Formation was never an easy task. The initiation of our own spiritual journeys, which was influenced more through the actions of our parents than sit-down talks, may have inspired us to make the process of Faith Formation more organic for our children.

Exploring spirituality and the power of prayer through sharing of our Faith experiences, is something that we as a family very often engage in, encouraging each other to pray for family, friends, and those in need around us. The emphasis was always to treat prayer as conversations, expressing gratitude and not only as petitions during crises.

Our practice of discussing Sunday homilies and Bible verses helped in evaluating how well the children interpreted different aspects of what was preached and read, and filling in gaps, if any. A Family's spiritual journey is truly enriched when the children witness the Faith being lived in their day-to-day lives.

“So then, as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without actions is dead.” – James 2:26

During the lockdown, our spiritual enrichment journey took a hit - we missed going to the Church for Holy Mass, longed for receiving the Holy Eucharist and our children missed Catechism classes in person. However, amidst these minor negatives (we were much fortunate as compared to many others who struggled to make their ends meet), there were many positives too, for instance we were able to participate in the Holy Mass, Novenas, Rosaries and Adorations albeit online and the children were given Faith Formation sessions through online classes and interesting activities. These activities required them to read, understand the assigned topic thoroughly and use their creativity to express their thoughts in words, sketches, or paintings. I personally thought that this was a nice way to engage the children and let the thoughts linger in them longer as they complete their activities during weekdays.

As expected with my teenage son, I had to remind him multiple times to complete his weekly catechism activity and I am sure many parents will relate to my situation. Although the teenagers may seem slightly reluctant about being proactive in matters related to Catechism, I am content to observe that they grasp concepts well, have very insightful questions and have a strong sense of the Christian values. All they need are - answers to their questions, right direction when they seem confused and loving trust of their elders.

Lay the foundation of Faith, be aware of their participation in the class, monitor them gently, be with them when they need you without coming across as imposing and they will be all set to take off on their Faith journey.

Faith Formation of children is the principal responsibility of every parent and if we can try and centre it around its practicality through our actions, simplify complex concepts by sharing Faith experiences, they will find it easier to relate and adapt as they grow up to be incredible and staunch Faith warriors.

“It was necessary for man's salvation that there should be a knowledge revealed by God besides philosophical science built up by human reason” -
St. Thomas Aquinas



Small steps in the right direction



Sinda Leo

Sacred Heart Church, Bhayandar

All of us know that family is called the 'Domestic Church.' Getting our kids to grow in faith in the absence of participating physically in Holy Qurbana and Family unit meetings due to the lockdown was a great challenge. One thing we normally do is to start their day with the sign of the cross and a small prayer. Our kids have had a natural inclination to television since the lockdown. So at certain occasions, we showed them cartoons like 'Super book' which had bible story animations and Little Seraphim. We tried making them pray before study and before meals.

Whenever we gave them anything, we used to tell them that it is God who is their provider. So we make them thank Jesus for the gift they received. During our family prayer, we made our elder one, Emmanuel (5 years) slowly learn the Hail Mary prayer by making him repeat it with us several times. Since the past one and a half year, he has been reciting both Our Father and Hail Mary. Listening to our elder one, our young Daniel (3 and half years) too started reciting a few words of Hail Mary with his elder brother. Hopefully he'll learn it by next one month.

Giving peace after the family prayer is a fun thing to do now starting from eldest in the family to the youngest and then switching off the altar lights. Eesho mishihaykum sthuthi ayirikate which means Praise be to Jesus Christ or I see Jesus in you and praise Jesus is a powerful phrase which is the basis of our faith

formation. During the lockdown, attending holy mass online with children during Sundays atleast is a must for us. As parents, it is necessary to pray that we may be guided by the Holy Spirit to make our children grow in faith.

Always remember, our deeds are watched by our children. So practise what you want to make your children to practise. It's a habit at home that whenever anyone leaves home, we need to stand in front of the altar, praise God and apply holy water on our foreheads. Emmanuel and Daniel have started practicing this since the last two years. There have been occasions where we elders forgot at times in our hurry and Emmanuel has reminded us. During sickness, it's a general practice at home that everyone places their right hand on the forehead of the sick or the affected body part and praises God for some time, asks for God's mercy, recites three Hail Mary. We are happy that our kids started believing in this miraculous approach to prayer during good and bad times.

There are situations where we feel it's too difficult to live in faith and to make our kids grow in faith that we almost give up but it is the fervent prayers of our parents, departed souls, friends and relatives that strengthens us to grow in faith so that we can bring up the new generation in unwavering FAITH and HOPE.



SOWING THE SEEDS OF FAITH



Joseph Thanickal
St. Mary's Church, Badlapur

It's been a beautiful journey with my kids Nathan (8) and Briella (6). It was a great desire to teach them our faith. The lockdown made it more possible for us to do so. The following are the ways by which we did this -

Animation Series:

I found a good animation series on YouTube called the SUPERBOOK (also available on Google Store), which shows stories from the bible. The children love it.

Events:

During the DioFesta, after I taught David's and Hannah's dialogues to them, my kids got curious about how David, who was so small, really killed Goliath and what was so special about Hannah, Samuel's mother. When I explained God's hand in David's victory and Hannah's prayer about wanting to be a mother and that David represents (type of) Jesus and Hannah, Mother Mary they got excited. For the next few days, we could see David and Hannah running and jumping around.

Prayers:

Teaching the rosary was not that difficult as they recited it with us every evening. We used to pray the "I believe"

10 times, to discern a difficult situation we were in. After a few days, we were surprised to know that both could recite the "I believe" clearly and correctly.

Small acts of evangelisation:

One day, we told our son that if he talks and reads the Bible to our home growing plants, they would grow faster and be healthier since he cared for and watered the plants regularly. This continues till today.

Being an example:

I realized if I act in a certain way, they would imitate those things and apply it in their own life more easily. I remember when my daughter's teacher in the playgroup informed me in a PTA meeting that my daughter used to hug a little girl to comfort her when she cried bitterly. We were really surprised but I remembered how I used to embrace her when she was hurt. She did what she saw and experienced. After that, I have tried to be conscious about what I do in front of my kids.

Intercession:

We included intercession a few times while praying the rosary and explained to them its importance. Similarly, we prayed the ejaculation prayer, "I am vaccinated with the precious blood of Jesus. No virus can touch me" taught by our Pope Francis and replaced "I" with "This world".

I should say that these little practices have given me new insights to lead my life in Christ! Teaching someone else clarifies these aspects for us too. I believe that teaching our children strengthens our faith as well.



അനുഭവത്തിൽ നിന്ന് വിശ്വാസത്തിലേക്ക്



George Chirayath
St. Antony's Church, Kurla (W)



കോവിഡ് കാലത്ത് നടന്ന അനുഭവം തികച്ചും ദൈവാനുഭവത്തിലേക്ക് നയിക്കുന്നതായിരുന്നു. ആ അനുഭവം ഇവിടെ കുറിക്കട്ടെ.

പുതിയതായിമാറി വന്ന അച്ചന്തമായി യുവജനങ്ങൾ **Infant Jesus Church, Nasik**ലേക്ക് യാത്രപുറപ്പെട്ടു. വളരെ ആനന്ദകരമായിരുന്നു ആ യാത്ര എന്നാൽ അപ്രതീക്ഷിതമായിരുന്നു ആ അപകടം. ദൈവാനുഗ്രഹത്താൽ വലിയ പരുക്കുകൾ കൂടതെ രക്ഷപ്പെട്ടു. എങ്കിലും യാത്ര തുടർന്നു. വി. കുർബ്ബാനയിൽ പങ്കെടുത്ത് പ്രാർത്ഥനാപൂർവ്വം അവിടെനിന്നും യാത്രതിരിച്ചു. ഈ യാത്രക്കുശേഷം വന്ന അടുത്ത ദിവസമായിരുന്നു **Online platform** ലേക്ക് നാമെല്ലാം പ്രവേശിച്ചത്, പ്രത്യേകിച്ച് വിശ്വാസപരിശീലനം (**faith formation class**). തികച്ചും വിത്യസ്തമായ സംവിധാനമാണല്ലോ **Online faith formation** എന്നുള്ളത് നമുക്കെല്ലാവർക്കുമറിയാം. മതാധ്യാപകർക്ക് തികച്ചും നൂതനമായ ഒരു സംവിധാനം. വളരെ വലിയ വെല്ലുവിളിയായി മാറുകയാണ് ഓൺലൈൻ വിശ്വാസപരിശീലനം.

വിശ്വാസപരിശീലനം ആരംഭിക്കുന്നതു കൂടുംബത്തിലാണെന്ന് തർക്കാതീതമാണ്. എന്നാൽ ഇന്നത്തെ ചുറ്റുപാടിൽ, പ്രത്യേകിച്ച് കോവിഡ് മഹാമാരിയിലൂടെ കടന്നുപോകുമ്പോൾ,

പലതരത്തിലുള്ള വിഷമഘട്ടങ്ങളിലൂടെയാണ് ഓരോരുത്തരും കടന്നുപോകുന്നത്. യാത്രകൾ, ജോലികൾ, പ്രാർത്ഥനാസാഹചര്യം, സാമ്പത്തികമായ പ്രശ്നങ്ങൾ അങ്ങനെ പോകുന്നു വിഷമങ്ങൾ. ഇങ്ങനെയൊരു പ്രതിസന്ധിഘട്ടത്തിൽ വിശ്വാസപരിശീലനം തികച്ചും ഒരു വെല്ലുവിളിയാണ്. ഇവിടെയാണ് മതാധ്യാപകരുടെ പങ്ക് വർദ്ധിക്കുന്നത്. വിശ്വാസം എന്നുള്ളത് വ്യക്തിപരമാണ്. അവനവന്റെയുള്ളിൽ വിശ്വാസനാളത്തെ പ്രകാശിപ്പിക്കുകയാണ് വേണ്ടത്. അതിന് ദൈവാനുഭവം അനിവാര്യമാണ്. ദൈവം എന്നെ കാത്തുപരിപാലിക്കുന്നുവെന്നും അവിടത്തേക്കു മാത്രമാണ് നമ്മെ രക്ഷിക്കാനാകൂ എന്നുള്ള തിരിച്ചറിവും ബോധ്യവുമാണ് ഇന്നാവശ്യം. **Nasik**ലേക്കുള്ള യാത്ര തികച്ചും ദൈവാനുഭവത്തിലേക്ക് നയിച്ചുവെന്നും തുടർന്നുള്ള വിശ്വാസ ജീവതത്തിൽ കൂടുതൽ ഉണർവോടും, ആത്മാർത്ഥതയോടും കൂടി ജീവിക്കാൻ സാധിക്കുന്നുവെന്ന് എടുത്തു പറയട്ടെ.

ഈ കോവിഡ് കാലം നമ്മെ കൂടുതൽ വിശ്വാസത്തിലേക്കും, ദൈവാനുഭവത്തിലേക്കും നമ്മെ ഓരോരുത്തരേയും നയിക്കട്ടെ എന്നു പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കുന്നു.

ദൈവത്തിനു നന്ദി!



MY BUDDY JESUS



Sherin Antony
St. Mary's Forane Church, Andheri West

One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God

(Matthew 4:4). I as a child, used to go to church every day, sit in the front row and envision Jesus Christ sending His Words from his mouth and if he does, I would be the first to catch it. Although, I couldn't comprehend this word of God, in its right sense then, I would always be agog to go to Church. Lord Jesus to me is what a cell is to my body. He makes up every minutiae of my life. Catechism classes was one of the platforms which demystified the true meaning of this Word of God, and I used to learn more about Jesus and always clung to the realms of fantasy, the classes brought in. I used to be spellbound and bewitched knowing I could learn everything about my Lord in those classes and every year I emerged as the topper. In this day and age, I take pride to continue associated with Him as a catechism teacher. Neither did He leave me nor did I.

When life was normal and I began to be complacent with His blessings, He sent this lifetime learning in the form of a zoonotic disease termed Covid-19. My life since then changed to appreciate how precious even a walk in the garden is. I embraced the change and the virtual world of profession, career, learning and above all, my time with Him. Irrespective of all the constraints, the best I could deliver to my heart's content was my catechism classes. I wonder how He prepared us for this situation long back. Had this pandemic hit us more than a decade ago, when the world was not ready with virtual

platforms like Google Meet (launched in year 2011), Zoom (launched in 2017), MS Teams (launched in 2017) or even Whatsapp at this scale, how we would have been able to stay connected or live our life like now. Although I miss hugging my benign catechism students and having a coffee time with them, my world of catechism did not halt. When the lockdown uplifted, I had to travel for work, and I continued to teach them irrespective of the operating territory I were in. Days when I was under the weather, the virtual platform helped not to miss any classes. What touched me most was the joy and eagerness with which my students attended the class without any objection to the virtual mode of learning. Our diocesan catechism department was so magnanimous that they provided all learning materials and even cut short the academic syllabus not to harm



children with prolonged screen time. I feel so grateful to their efforts to curtail our challenges.

When I face problems, I share it with my Jesus as a Buddy, and He helps me to put on a brave face and allow me to break through it. I feel Him in whatever I do. The gifts of Holy Spirit help me not to define any boundaries for myself. He makes me resilient and I emerge as a winner cutting all complexities. I pass this attitude to my catechism students and I am on zenith of happiness for each and every smile that they exchange. When they make my Sunday, I carry it for the week ahead.

“When you are going through difficulty and wonder where God is, remember that the teacher is always quiet during the test”.



St. Joseph: The Aspiring Youth



Little Joseph grew not just in age but also in wisdom. Unlike other teenagers who would love to spend their time with friends, playing and making mischief, Joseph would consecrate himself in prayer and fasting. He received a very unique gift, a gift that would bring solace to many. It was to assist the dying in their final struggle through which he saved several souls from the perils of eternal death in hell. His angel would often wake him up from sleep when any struggling soul required assistance.

His love for scriptures kept growing as he engrossed himself in reading and meditation. He would often contemplate on the lives of those who had fallen to the clutches of sin due to their lack of self-control (Eg. David) and thus as a teen, he guarded his senses in the most sublime way. In moments that he felt he was falling to sin, he would quickly raise his eyes heavenward and think about God.

Although he lived a most sincere and holy life, there were times when he felt great abandonment and distress, but he would never cease praying. When he was eighteen, his angel asked him to unite himself even more to the divine will as his parents were to be united with God. First, his mother and then his father, both succumbed to a deathly and painful illness as God purified them in the earthly realm, as per the prayers of Joseph, so that they would unite with God upon their death. He sought forgiveness from both and ensured that he assisted them until the very end.

Joseph, now an orphan, young and humble in nature, was taken advantage of by many- his relatives, neighbors, and even his servants. They sought this as an opportunity to ill-treat him and to swindle all that they could. He was severely admonished by others. Satan tried his best to bring Joseph to suffer intensely at the hands of those who were responsible to protect him. But never once did Joseph lose his temper and upon further prayer, God instructed his angel to ask Joseph to sell his possessions for the poor and only take one-third of it for himself. As instructed, Joseph settled all accounts and left for Jerusalem to start off a new chapter.

Upon his arrival in Jerusalem, he first offered thanksgiving in the temple for the great mercy that God

had poured out on him and as instructed by the angel, he offered two-third of the money he brought to the temple, and of what had left, he gave half to the poor and kept the other half for himself. Thus Joseph embraced the life of utter poverty. God had arranged for Joseph a God-fearing master, who was to orient him in carpentry. And Joseph, due to his modesty and diligence, was quick in learning.

Upon the death of his loving teacher, Joseph became an independent craftsman. In spite of all the work he had, he never once did procrastinate when it came to prayer and spiritual growth. As he thrived towards his youth-hood, he spent more time and effort in pleasing God and fulfilling all the obligations at work, diligently. One night, his angel appeared in his dream and told him of a maiden in the temple, pure and holy, who pleased the Lord and Joseph rejoiced evermore as he knew that there was no other creature who was so worthy and pleasing to God. It was none other than MARY.

Teenage and youth-hood, an impulsive, indecisive, immature period for most of us, was a tough one for St. Joseph. Yet when we examine his life, we see how much his love for God exceeded his love for himself. At a point of time where we flinch easily on being falsely accused, admonished, looked down, advised, or at a point where we are easily swayed by our emotions and fantasies, young St. Joseph held a firm ground. He truly is a model for the youth. In an era where being a workaholic is considered as a compliment, St. Joseph reminds us that worship belongs to God alone and diligence in work is an essential virtue. Living a life of forgiveness, humility, self-control, holiness, and diligence is definitely, definitely not easy, but it isn't IMPOSSIBLE. - "I can do all things through him who strengthens me" - Phil 4:13.

St. Joseph, Model of Youth and Patron of Workers- PRAY FOR US



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വി. യൗസേപ്പ്: ഉന്നതങ്ങളെ ലക്ഷ്യമാക്കിയ യുവാവ്

ബാലനായ ജോസഫ് പ്രായത്തിൽ മാത്രമല്ല, വിജ്ഞാനത്തിലും വളർന്നു വന്നു. തന്റെ പ്രായത്തിലുള്ള മറ്റു പല കൗമാരക്കാരെയും പോലെ കളികളിലും വികൃതിത്തരങ്ങളിലും അവൻ സമയം ചിലവഴിക്കാൻ ഇഷ്ടപ്പെട്ടിരുന്നില്ല. മറിച്ച് പ്രാർത്ഥനയിലും ഉപവാസത്തിലും വളരുന്നതിനായി ജോസഫ് തന്നെത്തന്നെ പൂർണ്ണമായും സമർപ്പിച്ചു. മരണാസന്നരായവരെ സ്വാന്തര്യപ്പെടുത്തുന്നതിനുള്ള അസാധാരണമായ ഒരു വരം അവനു ലഭിച്ചിരുന്നു. ഇതിലൂടെ പല ആത്മാക്കളെയും നരകയാതനകളിൽ നിന്ന് രക്ഷിക്കുവാൻ അവനു സാധിച്ചു. സംഘർഷമനുഭവിക്കുന്ന ഏതെങ്കിലും ആത്മാവിന് സഹായമാവശ്യമുള്ളപ്പോഴൊക്കെ അവന്റെ ആത്മാവ്, അവനെ ഉറക്കത്തിൽ നിന്നുണർത്തി, കഷ്ടപ്പെടുന്ന ആ ആത്മാവിന് സഹായിക്കുവാൻ പ്രേരിപ്പിച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരുന്നു.

വി. ലിഖിതങ്ങൾ വായിക്കുകയും ധ്യാനിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നോടും അവയോടുള്ള സ്നേഹം ജോസഫിൽ കൂടി വന്നു. തങ്ങളുടെ ആത്മസംയമനം ഇല്ലായ്മകൊണ്ട് പാപത്തിന്റെ പിടിയിൽപ്പെട്ട് വലഞ്ഞവരുടെ ജീവിതത്തെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള (ഉദാ. ദാവീദ്) വിചിന്തനങ്ങൾ, കൗമാരക്കാരനായ ജോസഫിനെ തന്റെ പഞ്ചേന്ദ്രിയങ്ങൾ അത്യുത്കൃഷ്ടമായ നിലയിൽ പരിരക്ഷിക്കുന്നതിനു പ്രേരിപ്പിച്ചു. പാപത്തിന്റെ പിടിയിൽ വീണുപോകുമെന്ന് തോന്നിയപ്പോഴൊക്കെ അവൻ സ്വർഗ്ഗത്തിലേക്ക് കണ്ണുകളുയർത്തി ദൈവവിചാരത്താൽ തന്റെ മനസ്സിനെ നിറച്ചു.

ആത്മാർത്ഥതയോടെയുള്ള വിശുദ്ധമായ ഒരു ജീവിതമാണ് ജോസഫ് നയിച്ചിരുന്നതെങ്കിലും പരിത്യജിക്കപ്പെടലിന്റേയും മറ്റു ദുരിതങ്ങളുടേയും അനുഭവങ്ങളിലൂടെ അവനു കടന്നു പോകേണ്ടി വന്നു. പക്ഷെ അങ്ങനെയുള്ള സങ്കടകരമായ അവസരങ്ങളിലും അവൻ പ്രാർത്ഥനയിൽ നിന്ന് പിന്തിരിഞ്ഞിരുന്നില്ല.

ജോസഫിന് പതിനെട്ടു വയസ്സായപ്പോൾ തന്റെ മാതാപിതാക്കൾ എങ്ങനെ ദൈവവുമായി ഒന്നായിരുന്നുവോ അതുപോലെ അവനും ദൈവതിരുമനസ്സിനു കൂടുതൽ വിധേയപ്പെട്ട്



ദൈവവുമായി പൂർണ്ണഐക്യത്തിലേക്ക് വളരുവാൻ, അവന്റെ കാവൽമാലാഖ അവനോട് നിർദ്ദേശിച്ചു. ആദ്യം അവന്റെ അമ്മയും പിന്നീട് അപ്പനും, വേദന നിറഞ്ഞ മരണകരമായ രോഗാവസ്ഥയ്ക്ക് കീഴ്പ്പെട്ടപ്പോൾ, ദൈവം ജോസഫിന്റെ പ്രാർത്ഥനയിലൂടെ, ഈ ലോക ജീവിതത്തിലെ എല്ലാ അശുദ്ധിയിൽ നിന്നും അവരെ ശുദ്ധീകരിച്ചു. അതുകൊണ്ട് മരണശേഷം അവർക്ക് ദൈവവുമായി ഒന്നായിത്തീരുവാൻ സാധിച്ചു. ജോസഫ് തന്റെ മാതാപിതാക്കളോട് അവരുടെ മരണസമയത്ത് ക്ഷമയാചിക്കുകയും, മരണം വരെ അവർക്കു വേണ്ട സഹായങ്ങളും പരിചരണങ്ങളും ഉറപ്പാക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു.

മാതാപിതാക്കളുടെ മരണശേഷം അനാഥനായ അവനെ, അവന്റെ ചെറുപ്പവും എളിമ നിറഞ്ഞ

പ്രകൃതവും മുതലാക്കി, ബന്ധുക്കളും അയൽക്കാരും മാത്രമല്ല, മറിച്ച് പരിചാരകൻമാർപോലും ഉപദ്രവിക്കുകയും കബളിപ്പിച്ച പണം കൈക്കലാക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു. മറ്റുള്ളവരുടെ ഭേദനങ്ങൾക്ക് അവൻ നിരന്തരം വിധേയനായി. സംരക്ഷിക്കുവാൻ കടപ്പെട്ടവരിൽ നിന്നു തന്നെ അതികഠിനമായ സഹനങ്ങൾ ഏൽപ്പിക്കുന്നതിന് സാത്താൻ തീവ്രപരിശ്രമം നടത്തിക്കൊണ്ടിരുന്നു. പക്ഷെ ഒരിക്കൽപോലും ജോസഫ് തന്റെ ആത്മനിയന്ത്രണം കൈവിട്ടില്ല. മാത്രമല്ല, പ്രാർത്ഥനകളുടെ ഫലമായി ദൈവത്തിന്റെ ഇടപെടൽ ഉണ്ടായി. തനിക്കുള്ള സ്വത്തുകളിൽ മൂന്നിൽ ഒരു ഭാഗം എടുത്തിട്ട് ബാക്കി മുഴുവനും വിറ്റ് പാവങ്ങളെ സഹായിക്കുവാൻ ജോസഫിന്റെ കാവൽ മാലാഖ വഴി ദൈവം അവനോട് നിർദ്ദേശിച്ചു. സ്വത്തുകളുടെ ക്രയവിക്രയം ക്രമീകരിച്ചശേഷം ദൈവനിർദ്ദേശപ്രകാരം അവൻ ജറുസലേമിൽ പോയി തന്റെ ജീവിതത്തിന്റെ ഒരു പുതിയ അദ്ധ്യായം തുടങ്ങി.

ജറുസലേമിൽ എത്തിയ ഉടനെ, ദൈവം തന്നിൽ വർഷിച്ച വലിയ കരുണയ്ക്ക് ദൈവാലയത്തിൽ ചെന്ന് ജോസഫ് നന്ദി അർപ്പിച്ചു. തുടർന്ന് തന്റെ സമ്പത്തു വിറ്റു കിട്ടിയ ധനത്തിന്റെ മൂന്നിൽ രണ്ടു ഭാഗം മാലാഖ നിർദ്ദേശിച്ചപോലെ ദൈവാലയത്തിൽ കാഴ്ചയായി അർപ്പിച്ചു. ശേഷിച്ച ധനത്തിൽ പകുതി ദരിദ്രർക്കു കൊടുക്കുകയും ബാക്കി തന്റെ ആവശ്യത്തിനായി സൂക്ഷിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു. അങ്ങനെ കൊടിയ ദാരിദ്ര്യം അവൻ സന്തോഷപൂർവ്വം സ്വീകരിച്ചു. ദൈവം ജോസഫിനുവേണ്ടി ഒരുക്കിയ ദൈവഭയമുള്ള ഒരു ഗുരുനാഥനിലൂടെ മരപ്പണിയിൽ അവൻ വൈദഗ്ധ്യം നേടി. അവന്റെ എളിമയും ശുഷ്കാന്തിയുമാണ് പെട്ടെന്ന് പഠിച്ച് ഒരു കരകൗശല വിദഗ്ദ്ധൻ ആകുന്നതിന് അവനെ സഹായിച്ചത്.

സ്നേഹനിധിയായ തന്റെ ഗുരുനാഥന്റെ മരണശേഷം ജോസഫ് സ്വതന്ത്രനായ ഒരു കരകൗശല വിദഗ്ദ്ധനായി മാറി. ധാരാളം ജോലിത്തീരക്കുണ്ടായിരുന്നെങ്കിലും ഒരിക്കൽ പോലും പ്രാർത്ഥനയുടേയും ആദ്ധ്യാത്മിക വളർച്ചയുടേയും കാര്യത്തിൽ അവൻ ഉപേക്ഷ വിചാരിച്ചിരുന്നില്ല. യുവത്വത്തിന്റെ പൂർണ്ണതയിലേക്കുള്ള വളർച്ചാകാലഘട്ടത്തിൽ ദൈവത്തെ പ്രസാദിപ്പിക്കുന്നതിലും ജോലിയിലുള്ള ചുമതലകൾ പൂർണ്ണമായി നിർവ്വഹിക്കുന്നതിലും ജോസഫ് വ്യാപൃതനായിരുന്നു. ഒരു രാത്രി അവന്റെ

മാലാഖ പരിശുദ്ധയായ ഒരു കന്യകയെക്കുറിച്ച് അവനോടു പറഞ്ഞു. അവൾ ദൈവത്തിന് ഏറ്റവും പ്രീതിപാത്രമായവൾ ആയിരുന്നു. അവളെക്കുറിച്ചറിഞ്ഞപ്പോൾ ജോസഫ് അതിയായി സന്തോഷിച്ചു. അത് പരിശുദ്ധ മറിയമല്ലാതെ മറ്റാരുമായിരുന്നില്ല.

കൗമാരവും യുവത്വവും പലർക്കും ഉറച്ച തീരുമാനങ്ങളില്ലാതെ, അനിശ്ചിതത്വം നിറഞ്ഞ, അപക്വമായ ജീവിതത്തിന്റെ കാലഘട്ടമാണല്ലോ. ജോസഫിനെ സംബന്ധിച്ചും കഠിനമായ വെല്ലുവിളികൾ നിറഞ്ഞതായിരുന്നു ഈ കാലഘട്ടം. പക്ഷെ അവന്റെ ജീവിതം പരിശോധിക്കുമ്പോൾ ദൈവത്തോടുള്ള ജോസഫിന്റെ സ്നേഹം, തന്നോടുതന്നെയുള്ള സ്നേഹത്തെ എത്രമാത്രം വെല്ലുന്നതാണെന്ന് നമുക്കു മനസ്സിലാക്കാം.

അകാരണമായ കുറ്റപ്പെടുത്തലുകളും ശകാരങ്ങളും അതുപോലെയുള്ള മറ്റു കാരണങ്ങളും സാധാരണക്കാരെ ജീവിതപരാജയത്തിലേക്ക് നയിക്കുന്ന കാലഘട്ടമാണ് യൗവ്വനം. അനിയന്ത്രിതമായ വികാരങ്ങളിലും മനോരാജ്യ സങ്കല്പങ്ങളിലും പെട്ട് എളുപ്പത്തിൽ ആടി ഉലയുന്ന ഈ ഘട്ടത്തിൽ, ഉറച്ച നിലപാടുകളുമായി അവയൊക്കെ തരണം ചെയ്യുവാൻ ജോസഫിനായി എന്നത് പ്രത്യേകം എടുത്തു പറയേണ്ടതാണ്. അതെ, അവൻ എല്ലാ യുവാക്കൾക്കും ഒരു നല്ല മാതൃക തന്നെയാണ്. ദൈവത്തെ മറന്ന് ജോലിയിൽ മാത്രം ശ്രദ്ധ കേന്ദ്രീകരിക്കുന്നതിനെ മഹത്വവല്കരിക്കുന്ന ഈ കാലഘട്ടത്തിൽ ആരാധന ദൈവത്തിന് മാത്രം അവകാശപ്പെട്ടതാണെന്നും അതിലൂടെ ഉണ്ടാകുന്ന ജോലിയിലെ ശുഷ്കാന്തി ഒരു ആവശ്യഗുണമാണെന്നും വി. യൗസേപ്പ് നമ്മെ ഓർമ്മിപ്പിക്കുന്നു. ക്ഷമ, വിനയം, ആത്മനിയന്ത്രണം, വിശുദ്ധി, ഉത്സാഹം തുടങ്ങിയ പുണ്യങ്ങളിലൂടെ ജീവിതം നയിക്കുന്നത് തീർച്ചയായും എളുപ്പമല്ല; പക്ഷെ അത് അസാധ്യമല്ല എന്ന് അദ്ദേഹം സാജീവിതത്തിലൂടെ നമ്മെ പഠിപ്പിക്കുന്നു.

“എന്നെ ശക്തനാക്കുന്നവനിലൂടെ എല്ലാം ചെയ്യാൻ എനിക്ക് സാധിക്കും” (ഫിലിപ്പി. 4:12).

വി. യൗസേപ്പേ, യുവാക്കളുടെ മാതൃകയേ, തൊഴിലാളികളുടെ മധ്യസ്ഥനേ, ഞങ്ങൾക്കുവേണ്ടി പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കണമേ.



തയാറാക്കിയത്:
വിൻസി കുറ്യൻ
ഹോളി ട്രിനിറ്റി ചർച്ച്, താണെ ബെഞ്ചിൾ അപ്പസ്തോലന്റ്



യഥാർത്ഥ വിശ്വാസത്തോടെ

മാർ തോമസ് ഇലവനാൽ

കല്ലാൺ രൂപതയുടെ മെത്രാൻ



ഈശോയുടെ തിരുശ്ശരീരം രണ്ടായി വിഭജിക്കുന്നതിനുമുമ്പായി കാർമ്മികൻ “കർത്താവായ ദൈവമേ, അങ്ങയുടെ നാമത്തിൽ” എന്നു തുടങ്ങുന്ന പ്രാർത്ഥന ചൊല്ലുന്നു. ഇവിടെ മൂന്നു കാര്യങ്ങൾ ചെയ്യുന്നതായി പറയുന്നുണ്ട്. വിശുദ്ധ രഹസ്യങ്ങളെ ഞങ്ങൾ സമീപിക്കുന്നു, അവയെ വിഭജിക്കുന്നു, റൂൾമ ചെയ്യുന്നു. യഥാർത്ഥ വിശ്വാസത്തോടെയാണ് ഞങ്ങൾ ഈ ദിവ്യരഹസ്യങ്ങളെ സമീപിക്കുന്നതെന്നും ദൈവത്തിന്റെ അനുഗ്രഹത്താലും കാര്യങ്ങളാലുമാണ് വിഭജിച്ച് റൂൾമ ചെയ്യുന്നതെന്നും ഏറ്റു പറയുന്നു.

തിരുവോസ്തി വിഭജിക്കുന്നു.

അന്ത്യത്താഴത്തിൽവെച്ച് ഈശോ തന്റെ ശരീരമാകുന്ന അപ്പം ശിഷ്യന്മാർക്ക് മുറിച്ചു കൊടുത്തതിനെ വിഭജനശുശ്രൂഷ അനുസ്മരിക്കുന്നു (മത്താ. 26 : 26; മർക്കോ. 14 : 22; ലൂക്ക. 22 : 19). അതുകൊണ്ട് ആദിമസഭയിൽ വി. കുർബ്ബാനയെ ‘അപ്പംമുറിക്കൽ’ എന്നാണ് വിളിച്ചിരുന്നത് (നട. 2:7; 4:2). ഉത്ഥാനാനന്തരം മിശിഹാ പല അവസരങ്ങളിലും ശിഷ്യന്മാർക്കു പ്രത്യക്ഷപ്പെടുന്നുണ്ട്. തിബേരിയൂസ്തീരത്തു വെച്ചും പ്രത്യേകമായി എമ്മാവൂസിൽ വെച്ചും (ലൂക്ക. 24 : 30) അപ്പം മുറിച്ചു നല്കിയതിനേയും ഈ വിഭജനശുശ്രൂഷ അനുസ്മരിക്കുന്നു.

ഐക്യത്തിന്റെ പ്രതീകം

അപ്പംമുറിക്കൽ അന്ത്യത്താഴത്തിൽ കർത്താവ് ചെയ്തതിന്റെ ഓർമ്മ മാത്രമല്ല വിശ്വാസികളുടെ ഇടയിലുണ്ടായിരിക്കേണ്ട ഐക്യത്തിന്റെ കൂടെ പ്രതീകമാണ്. ഒരേ അപ്പത്തിൽ നിന്ന് ഭക്ഷിക്കുന്നവരുടെ ഇടയിലുണ്ടായിരിക്കേണ്ട ഐക്യത്തെപ്പറ്റി വി. പൗലോസ് അനുസ്മരിക്കുന്നുണ്ടല്ലോ (1 കൊറി. 10 : 17). സഭാതനയരല്ലാവരും ഒരേ അപ്പത്തിൽ നിന്ന് ഭക്ഷിച്ച് ഒന്നായിത്തീരണമെന്ന സൂചനയും നല്കുന്നതാണ് വിഭജനശുശ്രൂഷ.

മരണവും ഉത്ഥാനവും

കൂടാതെ, കർത്താവിന്റെ മരണത്തിന്റേയും ഉത്ഥാനത്തിന്റേയും രഹസ്യം പൂർണ്ണമായും അനുസ്മരിക്കുന്ന കർമ്മമാണ് വിഭജനശുശ്രൂഷ. വിഭജനം പ്രത്യേകമായി അവിടുത്തെ മരണത്തെ ദ്യോതിപ്പിക്കുന്നു. വിഭജനത്തിനുശേഷം രണ്ടു ഭാഗങ്ങളും കൂട്ടിച്ചേർക്കുന്നത് ഉത്ഥാനത്തേയും ദ്യോതിപ്പിക്കുന്നു. അങ്ങിനെ പാപപ്പരിഹാരത്തിനായി വിഭജിക്കപ്പെട്ടതാണ് കർത്താവിന്റെ ശരീരമെന്നും കടങ്ങളുടെ മോചനത്തിനായി ചിന്തപ്പെട്ടതാണ് കർത്താവിന്റെ രക്തമെന്നും വിഭജനശുശ്രൂഷ നമ്മെ അനുസ്മരിക്കുന്നു.

റൂൾമ ചെയ്യുന്നു

തിരുവോസ്തി വിഭജിച്ചശേഷം കാർമ്മികൻ വലത്തെ കയ്യിലുള്ള വി. കുർബ്ബാനയുടെ ഭാഗം കൊണ്ട് തിരുരക്തം റൂൾമചെയ്യുന്നു. അപ്പോൾ ഇങ്ങനെ പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കുന്നു : “നമ്മുടെ കർത്താവീശോമിശിഹായുടെ അമൂല്യമായരക്തം ജീവദായകമായ ശരീരം കൊണ്ട് റൂൾമ ചെയ്യപ്പെടുന്നു”. അതിനുശേഷം പീലാസയിൽ വെച്ചിരിക്കുന്ന തിരുവോസ്തിയുടെ പകുതിയിലും തിരുരക്തത്തിൽ മുക്കിയ ഭാഗംകൊണ്ട് റൂൾമ ചെയ്യുന്നു. അപ്പോൾ കാർമ്മികൻ ഇങ്ങനെ പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കുന്നു : “നമ്മുടെ കർത്താവീശോമിശിഹായുടെ തിരുശ്ശരീരം അവിടുത്തെ പാപമോചകമായ രക്തം കൊണ്ട് റൂൾമ ചെയ്യപ്പെടുന്നു”. അങ്ങിനെ, തിരുശ്ശരീരവും തിരുരക്തവും പരസ്പരം കലർത്തപ്പെടുകയും യോജിക്കപ്പെടുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു. ഇതുപോലെ തിരുരക്തത്തിൽ മുക്കിയ തിരുവോസ്തികൊണ്ട് കൂസേതാതിയിലെ തിരുവോസ്തിയും റൂൾമ ചെയ്യപ്പെടുന്നുണ്ട്.

പരസ്പരം യോജിക്കപ്പെടുകയും

റൂൾമ ചെയ്യലും പരസ്പരം കലർത്തലും

തിരുശ്ശരീരരക്തത്തിന്റെ പരസ്പരബന്ധം സൂചിപ്പിക്കുന്നു, അവിഭാജ്യതയും ഐക്യവും വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നു. ഈ ശരീരവും രക്തവും ഈശോയാകുന്ന ദൈവപുത്രന്റെ സാന്നിധ്യമാണ്. റൂശ്മ ചെയ്യപ്പെട്ട അപ്പത്തിലും വീഞ്ഞിലുമുള്ള കർത്താവിന്റെ പൂർണ്ണസാന്നിധ്യത്തേയും ഇത് വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നു. ഇങ്ങനെ റൂശ്മയുടേയും കലർത്തലിന്റേയും ഉദ്ദേശം ഈശോയുടെ

ശരീരവും രക്തവും തന്നിൽ പരസ്പരം യോജിപ്പിച്ച് മുദ്രവയ്ക്കുകയാണ്. അതുകൊണ്ട് അപ്പത്തിന്റെ രൂപത്തിൽ മാത്രം വി. കുർബ്ബാന സ്വീകരിക്കുമ്പോഴും ഈശോയെ പൂർണ്ണരൂപത്തിൽത്തന്നെ ഒരാൾക്ക് സ്വീകരിക്കുവാൻ സാധിക്കുന്നു. എങ്കിലും സാധിക്കുമ്പോഴെല്ലാം ഇരുസാദൃശ്യത്തിലുമാണ് വി. കുർബ്ബാന സ്വീകരിക്കേണ്ടത്.

With True Faith

Mar Thomas Elavanal
Bishop, Diocese of Kalyan

Before breaking the sacred Host into two, the celebrant begins the prayer which is recited in low voice, “we approach these mysteries with true faith in your name”. Here three actions are mentioned. We approach these sacred mysteries, we break and we sign the Body and Blood. It is also mentioned that it is with true faith that we approach these mysteries and that it is through your great favour and mercy that we break and sign the Body and Blood of Our Lord.

Breaking of the Sacred Host

The rite of breaking reminds us of the example of Jesus breaking the sacred bread that was His body, during the Last Supper (Mt. 26:26; Mk. 14:22; Lk. 22:19). In the early Church Eucharist celebration was called ‘Breaking of the Bread’ (Acts. 2:7-11; 4:2). The rite of breaking of the Bread reminds us also of Jesus’ example of breaking the bread and giving it to the disciples after His resurrection especially at lake Tiberias and at Emmaus (Lk. 24:30).

Sign of Unity

The rite of breaking of the bread not only reminds us of the example of Jesus but also is symbolic of the unity that should exist among all the faithful. St. Paul reminds us of the unity that should exist among those who share from the one bread (1 Cor. 10:17). The rite of breaking is a call for all of us to share from the same bread or the body of Christ and to become one in love.

Death and resurrection

Besides, the rite of breaking of the bread reminds us of the mystery of Christ’s death and

resurrection. The breaking reminds us of Jesus death and both parts again brought together reminds us of His resurrection. Thus, rite of breaking reminds us that in the Eucharist, Jesus gives us His body broken and His blood shed for the forgiveness of our sins.

Rite of Consignation

After breaking the Sacred Host, the celebrant, with the half that is in the right hand signs the sacred blood in the form of the cross saying “the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ is signed with His life giving Body”. With the sacred Host that was dipped in the sacred blood he signs the other half that is placed on the paten saying “the sacred body of our Lord Jesus Christ is signed with His propitiatory Blood”. Thus the body and blood of Jesus are mingled and united together. So too, the celebrant signs the sacred hosts in the Ciborium.

United with each other

This rusma and mingling signify the unity of the body and blood of Christ on the altar. This body and blood is the real presence of Jesus the Son of God. As a result of the rusma and consignation or mingling, there is the presence of the blood in the body and body in the blood. This signifies the total presence of Christ in both the species. Hence even if one receives Eucharist only in the form of bread one receives the whole Christ, body and blood. In spite of that it is highly recommend that whenever possible the faithful should be given communion in both species, of body and blood.



KEY word – PATRIS CORDE

Read the extract of the encyclical 'PATRIS CORDE' and click on the below link to solve the quiz. Last date of submitting response is 18-07-2021. Names of the winners will be published in the next issue and on our social media handles.

Link for the Passage

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IVZaL2Zv82yW-7vdfnrZ5j9uGxcFltG0/view?usp=sharing>

Link for the Quiz

<https://forms.gle/M8Q3bNqkDUmsmchJA>

WINNERS OF JUNE EDITION

Teena Tomy – St Thomas Forane Church, Borivali

Glennis Joy – St Kuriakose Elias Chavara Church, Kandivali (E)

Manu Johnson – St Thomas Cathedral, Kalyan (W)

Vini Joseph Mandanath – St Anthony Church, Kurla

Glen Johny Menacherry – St George Forane Church, Panvel

Shilpa Mathew – Sacred Heart Church, Bhayandar (E)

Jessica Toyson – St Mary's Church, Malad (E)

Justin Jacob – St Mary's Church, Badlapur

Sneha Varghese – St Alphonsa Church, Pen

Amal Rapheal – Mary Matha Church, Kamothe

Correct Answers of June Edition

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SY5JL2n19PBWbP5op4z9t1dSjyPgj8De/view?usp=sharing>

INAUGURATION OF CATECHETICAL YEAR 2021-2022

Year of Holy Qurbana
and St Joseph



DEPARTMENT OF CATECHESIS
DIOCESE OF KALYAN



Did You Know?



1) 'Acts of Judas Thomas' is the earliest written source that speaks of the preaching of St. Thomas in India.

2) In the olden times, there were two possible routes to India - silk route and maritime route. St. Thomas is believed to have taken the maritime route.

3) On reaching India, St. Thomas first landed at Bharuch (Barygaza) and led his way via Vidisa, Ujjain and Mathura to Taxila. From Taxila, he went back to Jerusalem and then on a second voyage to India, Thomas reached Muziris (modern-day North Paravur and Kodungalloor in Kerala) in 52 A.D. as the traditions recount.

4) The Apostle Thomas could have boarded any of the 120 ships that used to voyage to the Indian ports every year.

5) All seven places where St. Thomas is said to have established communities are now strong Christian centres and all of them offer tangible evidence for the mission of the Apostle.

6) The 'Rambanpattu' which summarizes the traditions of Malabar regarding the mission of St. Thomas narrates that before crossing over to the Coromandel Coast, the Apostle had already strengthened the communities by ordaining bishops and priests for them.

7) On the way to India, it is believed that he might have stayed on Socotra and preached the Gospel there establishing a Christian Community. Socotra is a small island in the Indian Ocean and is today part of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.

8) St. Francis Xavier, a thousand years later stated about the nominal presence of Christians in Socorta. According to them, they claimed to be Christians of St. Thomas.

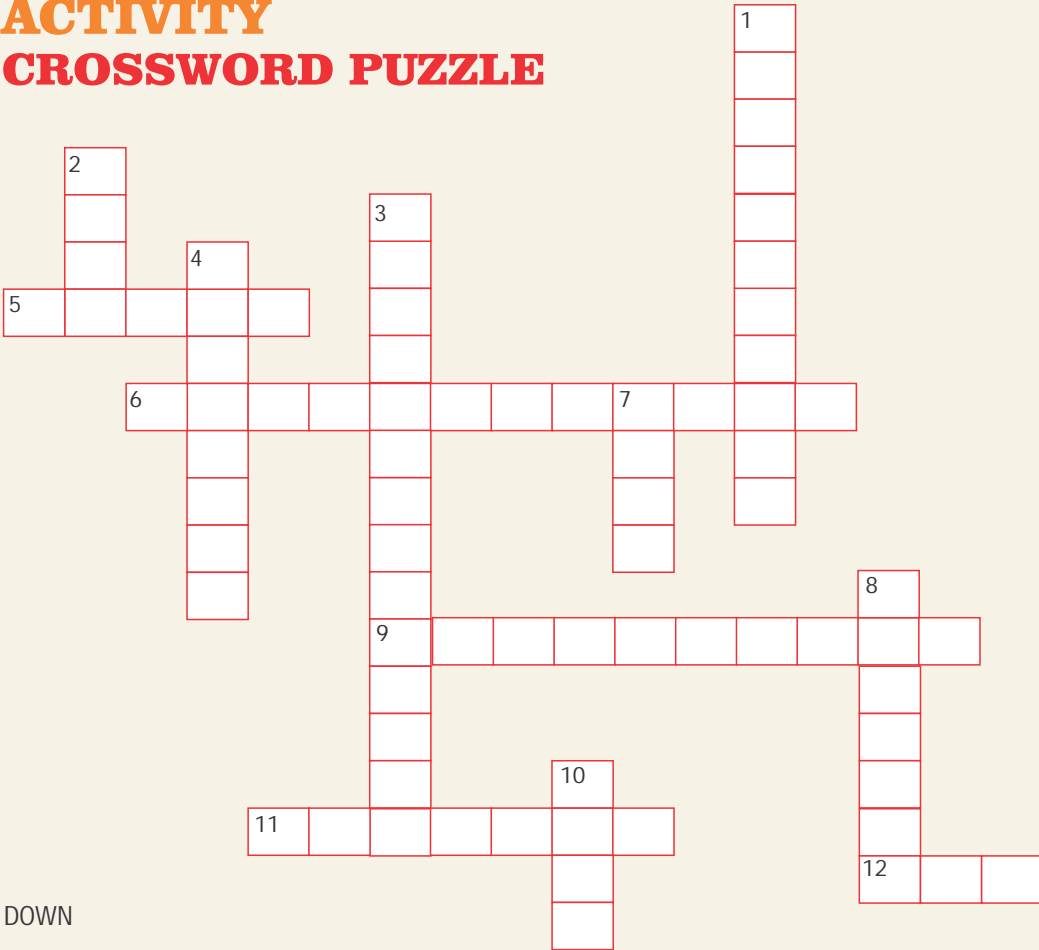


9) St. Thomas was in Caesara when the Lord asked him to go to India.

10) St. Thomas tradition in Maharashtra is seen mainly in Vasai, Thana and Sopara. In the 13th Century, when Jordanus (a missionary) arrived at Thana, there was already a church dedicated to St. Thomas. Jordanus attested to the fact that the Christians in these places had an extraordinary devotion for St. Thomas, "they considered St. Thomas, the great, as Christ."

ACTIVITY

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



DOWN

1. Where is St. Thomas Syro Malabar Catholic International Shrine located?
2. Thomas the Apostle's character is depicted more vividly in the Gospel of _____ in the New Testament.
3. As per the Gospel of St. John 20:28, Thomas answered him, "_____!"
4. On which sea did the Lord appear to Thomas and six of the other disciples when they had fished all night and caught nothing?
7. St.Thomas is referred to as "_____" several times in the New Testament since it is what his name means.
8. How did Jesus describe to Thomas those who have not seen but yet have believed?
10. The feast day of St.Thomas is celebrated on the 3rd of _____ every year.

ACROSS

5. In which country was the Holy Apostle Thomas martyred?
6. St. Thomas did not believe the incredible reality of Jesus' _____.
9. _____ is an ancient Indian round dance of the St.Thomas Christians community that retells the life and missionary work of St. Thomas, the Apostle.
11. The Apostle Thomas was also known by the name _____
12. John 11: 16 "Let us also go, that we may _____ with him."

Mail your answers to - lanternkidsroom@gmail.com on or before 15th July, 2021.
The names of three winners will be published in the next issue of 'Kalyan Lantern'



Question: Where to Seek?



Answer:

There is no wonder that our faith often raises questions to our intellect. Which are the apt and safest resources which can be relied upon for clarity and authenticity? Let's get acquainted with a few.

1. Catechism of the Catholic Church

Catechism of the Catholic Church was prepared so that it may be a sure and authentic reference text for teaching the Catholic doctrine and particularly for preparing local catechisms.

- The Catechism is arranged in four principal parts:
- The Profession of Faith (the Apostles' Creed)
- The Celebration of the Christian Mystery (the Sacred Liturgy, and especially the sacraments)
- Life in Christ (including the Ten Commandments)
- Christian Prayer (including the Lord's Prayer)

This scheme is often referred to as the "Four Pillars" of Faith. The contents are abundantly footnoted with references to sources of the teaching, in particular the Scriptures, the Church Fathers, and the Ecumenical Councils and other authoritative Catholic statements, principally those issued by recent popes.

2. The Christian Faith compiled by J. Neuner, S.J., and J. Dupuis, S.J.

This classic collection of documents which define the Christian faith as understood by Catholics includes the creeds of the Church from the earliest times,

along with major extracts from all the important decrees of councils, popes and Vatican congregations touching on matters of faith. All these documents have been organized in chronological order, under themes, each with a helpful introduction and outline. The following are some of the topics discussed in detail:

- Revelation and faith
- Tradition and scripture
- The Triune God
- Original justice and fall
- Jesus Christ the saviour
- The Church and the world religions
- On the cult of saints and sacred images
- The sacraments of the church
- The life of grace
- Sexual order and respect for life

3. Online resources which are faithful to the official teachings of the catholic church.

- Word on Fire by Bishop Robert Barron
- Ascension Presents by Fr Mike Schmitz
- The Thomistic Institute by Dominican Friars
- St. Paul Centre for Biblical Theology by Dr. Scott Hahn
- Catholic Answers of Tim Staples and Jimmy Akin

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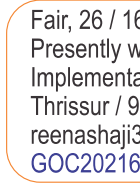
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*Congratulations
and Best wishes*

Golden Wedding Anniversary
24 May, 2021

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